



OHMVR COMMISSION MEETING Palmdale, CA 9351

March 13, 2015

STAFF REPORT: Outreach & Education Program – 2014 Review

STAFF: Natalie Lohi, Outreach & Education Program Manager

SUBJECT: Statewide Outreach & Education Program

Summary

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division oversees a robust and intensive, statewide Outreach and Education Program. 2014 proved to be a very productive and successful year. Our outreach program incorporates a dedicated team of professionals throughout the state that includes interpreters, rangers, seasonal park aides, volunteers, state and federal agencies, and non-profit partners. We paired effective, traditional methods with new and innovative programs to accomplish our educational goal—to develop an informed and educated community. We were diligent in reaching a broader, more diverse audience in 2014 to promote safe and responsible off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation and land stewardship.

Discussion

The Division Outreach Program was developed to support all six goals of the OHMVR Strategic Plan, but specifically addresses Goal 4, which is to develop an informed and educated community. We accomplish this goal by utilizing various methods of education and interpretation. Our interpreters and outreach staff have developed some very innovative and creative programs and techniques while continuing to embrace tried and true methods. This has combined to provide a very diverse and comprehensive statewide program. Some traditional methods include displays, informational kiosks, interpretive panels, printed materials, and face-to-face interactions at our parks, in schools, and at outreach events.

On the innovative side, we have diversified our outreach events to include many events where we can reach groups that may be less aware of the work we do in the OHMVR Division. For example, we provided outreach at the Native Plant Society Conference. We were able to reach a group who, in large part, did not realize we have a phenomenal resource management program. We were very well received and people appreciated learning that we provide *well-managed* OHV recreation opportunities.

We partnered with a county gang task force to provide underserved and troubled youth an opportunity to gain real-world work experience while learning about safety and resource management. These G.E.A.R.S program students were able to take ATV training, work on resource projects, gain credits toward graduating, and realize possible employment opportunities they never knew were available.

We developed a unique partnership with SportStars Magazine. This monthly magazine is marketed to youth and their parents and has a readership of 450,000 Northern and Central California residents. It is set to expand to Southern California in the very near future. In addition to a two-page spread in each monthly issue, SportStars also distributes printed materials such as our ATV Safety Cards at various major sporting events throughout the state.

We presented a class at the California Parks Training called “Modern Interpretation.” This class taught participants from our department, as well as other city, county, and federal parks about innovative approaches to reach a diverse and more technologically oriented audience. We featured our ATV Safety Computer Kiosk. A touch-screen, interactive game that teaches children safe and responsible recreation. We looked at various ways to use this technology. Such as, installing the game onto rugged tablets or laptops to be used by interpreters in the field—a plan we are exploring now. We discussed ways to ensure the integrity of an educational message while using hands-on, fun tools such as our TreadLightly!® Jeep Course. We highlighted the importance of collaboration and partnerships to cost-share and enhance educational messages, and shared various other ways we have made our program successful. A program that reached over a quarter of a million people in 2014:

Unit	2014 Total Interpretive Contacts	Venue/Event Resulting in Most Contacts
Heber Dunes SVRA	6,115	Imperial Valley Fair & Expo
Ocotillo Wells SVRA	53,441	In-Park Interpretive Displays & Programs
Hungry Valley SVRA	1935	Jethawks Outreach
Oceano Dunes SVRA	94,218	Mid State Fair
Hollister Hills SVRA	15,686	Motorcycle Rally
Carnegie SVRA	2,827	Visitor Appreciation Day
Prairie City SVRA	5,186	Hangtown Classic
Clay Pit SVRA	1,200	Visitor Appreciation Day
OHMVR Division HQ	119,956	California State Fair
Total Statewide 2014 Interpretive Cotacts:		299,484

2014 certainly was a successful year for the OHMVR Division's statewide Outreach and Education Program. However, the true strength of this program is the fact that it will never stop evolving. Talented and dedicated staff throughout the state continue to develop new programs, activities, and techniques to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California.

Commission Action

For information only.

Attachments

None